

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 SUVA 00999 130656Z  
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

ICA-11 EUR-12 /091 W

-----038290 130659Z /21

R 130315Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY SUVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7506

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, TV

SUBJECT: U. S. CLAIM TO TUVALU ISLANDS

1. THOMAS LAYNG, BRITISH COMMISSIONER OF TUVALU, REGISTERED PAINFUL SURPRISE TINGED WITH DISBELIEF WHEN I TOLD HIM 11 JUNE IN THE UK HIGH COMMISSION RESIDENCE THAT I HAD NOT BEEN BRIEFED ON THE USG CLAIM REGARDING THE TUVALU ISLANDS AND THAT THIS WAS A MATTER THAT PROPERLY IS BEING HANDLED IN WASHINGTON AND NOT OUT IN THE FIELD. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE MATTER WAS BEING DISCUSSED BETWEEN LONDON AND WASHINGTON AND SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY TO POINT OUT THAT THE U.S. CERTAINLY WILL NOT LIKE TO HAVE TUVALU REACH 1 OCTOBER DATE OF INDEPENDENCE WITH THE CLOUD OF THE USG CLAIM HANDING OVER THE LAGOON. HE FELT THAT IT WAS NOT QUITE FITTING FOR A COUNTRY LIKE THE U.S. TO PROLONG A DISPUTE THAT SEEMS TO REST ON "THE FLIMSIEST POSSIBLE LEGAL BASIS" NOT DID HE SEE HOW THE U.S. COULD FACE THE UNITED NATIONS AND CLAIM HALF OF TUVALU INCLUDING ITS CAPITAL JUST AS TUVALU WOULD BE ABOUT TO APPLY FOR UNITED NATIONS MEMBERSHIP.

2. THE COMMISSIONER CONCLUDED THAT HE WILL USE OUR CONVERSATION AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO FIRE ANOTHER BROADSIDE AT LONDON ASKING  
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PAGE 02 SUVA 00999 130656Z

HMG TO PRESS THE U.S. FOR APPROPRIATE ACTION BETWEEN NOW AND 1 OCTOBER.

3. COMMENT: WHILE COMMISSIONER LAYNG MAY HAVE BEEN DISPLAYING A TOUCH OF "LOCALITIS" IN HIS REACTION TO THE U.S. TUVALU DISPUTE THERE IS SOMETHING TO BE SAID ABOUT THE POINT THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION LOOKS AT LEAST UNTIDY IN VIEW OF THE IMPENDING

1 OCTOBER DATE OF TUVALU INDEPENDENCE.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: SINCE I PLAN TO VISIT THE ISLAND BEFORE INDEPENDENCE AND THEREFORE WILL BE SEEING LAYNG AGAIN TO SAY NOTHING OF THE ISLAND'S OFFICIALS I WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR INFORMATION ON HOW MATTER STANDS AND WHAT ACTION USG IS LIKELY TO TAKE BEFORE 1 OCTOBER OR FOR THAT MATTER AFTER THAT DATE AS WELL.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** INDEPENDENCE, ISLAND CLAIMS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Document Number:** 1978SUVA00999  
**Document Source:** CORE  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014